



Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

Title: The Role of Career Mentoring in Graduate Transitions

Transition(s) the practice supports: The University of Aberdeen Career Mentoring Programme matches employer mentor volunteers with student mentees for 6 months to develop their professional skills, knowledge and attitudes and support students as they transition into the world of work or postgraduate study.

Abstract: Delivered by the Careers Service and with strategic input from the Alumni Relations Team the 6-month career mentorships provide both undergraduates and taught postgraduates with an insight into the world of work or further study, and help students build confidence in applying for these opportunities. The Programme also enables students to enhance their professional skills and employment knowledge outside of their academic study as they transition into the life beyond the University. Working in close partnership with the Alumni Relations Team is crucial to drive the initiative and helps provide an excellent source of employer mentor volunteers with a wealth of specific careers experience and a real desire to connect to their local University.

Description:

The University of Aberdeen Career Mentoring Programme was launched in 2011 to enhance students' employability and offers a flexible programme of mentorship interactions over a six-month period (November to April). Since the initiative's inception over 500 students have benefited from the programme. To be considered for the competitive scheme students complete an online application form and submit their CV. During the mentorship students are expected to set their own career mentoring objectives and review these at the end of their mentorship. Mentees are supported by workshops and a range of written resources, and a bespoke Career Mentoring Programme Toolkit has been devised to support mentors. Guidance is also available to both mentors and mentees from the dedicated Work Placement and Mentoring Officer. A distinct feature of the career mentoring provision is the underpinning supporters' event programme hosted at a range of organisations (e.g. Pinsent Masons, Halliburton and Wood Group). Events strengthen links with employers and enable students to network and support their career learning.

During the Programme the mentor supports students by:



enhancement
themes

- Offering advice and guidance with their career planning and their transition from student to working professional or postgraduate study.
- Providing an 'insider's guide' to job search strategies or postgraduate applications.
- Supporting their understanding regarding skills and attributes development.

Evidence indicates mentors also gain valuable benefits including:

- Continuing Personal Development and the opportunity to enhance their coaching and mentoring skills.
- Keeping updated regarding developments in Higher Education.
- Broadening their professional networks and enhancing their interpersonal skills.

Institutionally, the Programme is clearly enhancing students' employability, by providing an opportunity for students to engage with early career development learning. Evidence of the impact of the Career Mentoring Programme on students' transition into the world of work or postgraduate study is also verified through the post-mentorship evaluation questionnaire data. Students often comment about the initiative being an extremely valuable aspect of their university experience and commonly cite benefits from the Programme such as: increased self-confidence; increased employment or postgraduate study awareness and improved career management skills.

Further evidence regarding the impact of the initiative on student transitions is supported by the following video which features a range of student career mentoring testimonials:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWqxIzqFar4

For further information: www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/skills-attributes/career-mentoring.php

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